

### Bible Engagement

Year B, Pentecost 3

By Beth Barnett

This is a Bible Engagement using 1 Samuel 8:4-11, 16-20 to explore the concept of 'Intervention'.

Use this resource during Early Word or Bible Reading times.

You will need:

- Copy of text on screen or printed, divided into 12 sections with 'tartan' icons (powerpoint included in the Visions and Voices Resources Zip)  
*Note that the small numbers on the text are not verse numbers, but are to keep the sections of text in order.*
- Large print out or freehand replica poster of Chris Booth's Art black and white image 'Intervention'
- The tartan body shapes (included – see below)
- Enough small printed tartan squares so that everyone in the gathering can have one (included – see below)
- 12 protest placards with tartan borders; printed with verses of text, aligning with the text on screen/printed copies.  
Print from powerpoint included in the Visions and Voices Resources Zip.
- 12 volunteers to model as tribal chiefs
- (optional) 12 tartan rugs/tablecloths/pieces of fabric
- alternative resourcing: invite 12 people from your community to bring a tartan

Time required:

7 minutes



## Introduction

Our Bible reading today comes from the time way way back in the Old Testament in the time when the people of God were a bunch of tribes in the hills of Israel. A bit like a set of clans that trace their ancestry back to one family. Sometimes they behaved like brothers, and looked out for one another, defended one another, worked together. And sometimes they behaved like brothers, and picked fights with each other, complained about each other, ganged up on each other. Brothers right? So here in our picture are the chiefs of those tribes of Israel. To remind us that We might think of them all wearing a different pattern of tartan, to show their different clans.



*Distribute some pieces of tartan patterned paper or cloth cut roughly in the shape of the bodies on the picture. With a small amount of blutak, invite participants with the tartans to come and stick them on the chiefs. (Option B: If you have a lively group of willing volunteers, choose 12 people to stand in a group - set them up for a 'clan photo' use tartan picnic rugs or blankets or table cloths. Option C: both of the above!)*

Up until this time the tribes are all have their own family chief or leader. But in todays reading they mount a protest, they have a rally, they stage an intervention and ask Samuel the prophet to give them a king.

So we are going to read this passage today in tribes or clans. Each person is being given a piece of tartan so they will know which tribe they are in - and which part of the story to read.

And as the tribes in the story are having a protest and demanding a new kind of government, the story is written on protecting placards.

*Distribute the tartan squares and give the matching placards to a representative in each tribe.*

*Invite the tribes to gather around their placard.*

*Give everyone a minute or two to practice reading the words on their tribe's placard, making sure everyone is included, whether they can read or not. Call the group back to order and begin the reading - each tribe reading their placard in order.*



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*After one reading, encourage a second reading through, but with some more political protest spirit!*

Well done protesters. What a mighty shift it was for Israel, God's rescued people to decide they wanted a king - with all the warnings of how terrible kings are, how a king would rip them off so many ways, be corrupt and self-centred. they still wanted a visible human king to show up and look powerful.

If we read on into the books of Samuel and Kings, we see that the kings of Israel do all turn out to do the things they were warned about.

The same warnings also seem relevant to world leaders today. I guess we shouldn't be so astonished that countries today still choose terrible leaders who misuse their power. Before we continue to ponder this passage, lets pause and pray for those in positions of power.

**Lord God of all nations and clans and families and communities,  
Forgive us for sticking too proudly to our tribes and traditions.  
Give us eyes to see those who are small in the world  
and to remember that they have particular purposes in your plans.  
Save us from leaders who want to be great  
and give your world little leaders  
who will pursue justice and provide care and justice for all.  
May we not worry about being small or few or forgotten, but trust in your  
wise ways of calling us and finding us and bringing us into your plans.  
Amen.**



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